(e) The NCERT pursues a curricular policy stressing on learning through mother tongue and enhancing the quality of education in rural schools. Improvement in curricular practices, including textbooks development, supplementary reading material, training systems, evaluation and examination systems, as well as classroom management systems will contribute to improving access, retention and quality of education in rural Government schools.

Prosecution powers to National Commission for Women

4048. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Women has powers to prosecute guilty for the offences committed against women and children;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether it is proposed to empower the Commission with suitable powers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) The recommendations made by the National Commission for Women (NCW) in the year 2000 for amendment of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 include provision of initiation of prosecution against a person considered to have committed any criminal offence. The same are under examination of the Government and have not been accepted so far. The NCW has the powers to fund litigation on behalf of women under the Act.

Suicide by students

† 4049. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as a result of existing education system and commercialisation thereof tragedy like suicide among students has arisen due to increasing competition among students and failure in the same;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(bj if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that our education system and prevailing defects in evaluation system are primarily behind this tendency; and

(d) IT so, the measures being taken by Government to check this tendency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M,D. ALIASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) The problem of increasing stress among students during examinations and instances of some students committing suicides due to failure in examination and stress have been engaging the attention of the Government. However, there are various contributory factors such as competition, peer and parental pressure, fast changing socio and economic conditions, lack of employment opportunities and fear of failure in examinations which become the cause of tragedies like suicides among students.

The Ministry is deeply concerned with the issue of high stress level among students caused by the public examinations at the end of class X and XII conducted by various boards, Joint Entrance Examinations for NTs and other entrance examinations. To address the question of promoting equality in access to education as also allow the students to have a stress free environment of joyful learning, the Ministry had convened a meeting recently with Eminent Educationists, Principals, representatives from premier institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Management, Heads of the Boards of Examination and others. It was unanimously agreed that there must be systemic reforms to eliminate exam-related stress. It was also felt that a national consensus on the issue should be reached through wider discussion.

Measures for schools hit by Tsunami disaster

4050. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has set up a group of experts to assess the damage and suggest measures for the schools hit by the Tsunami disaster; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?